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Jane Speece

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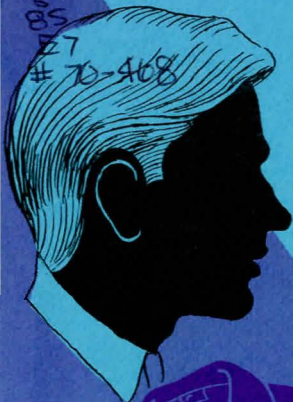
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EC 70-468

# A COAT

## AN ALL-WEATHER COAT FOR MEN



Extension Service, University of Nebraska College  
of Agriculture Cooperating with the U. S. Department  
of Agriculture and the College of Home Economics  
E. F. Frolik, Dean      J. L. Adams, Director

# *Let's Buy...* **A COAT**

## **AN ALL-WEATHER COAT FOR MEN**

**Jane Speece**  
**Extension Specialist (Clothing)**

When you're shopping for an all-weather man's coat, keep in mind the basics of good buymanship. Learning how to judge quality in a garment is your best guarantee that the coat you buy will be a good dollar value and a pleasure to wear.

### **Planning Ahead Helps**

A well-dressed appearance and a wisely chosen coat do not just happen. Begin by analyzing your wardrobe to help determine the style, the price and the variety of coat you'll buy. Ask yourself:

- ☐ . . .Do I need a rain coat or one that's heavier?
- ☐ . . .Would an all-weather coat with a zip-in lining answer my year-round needs?
- ☐ . . .What color will best coordinate with the suits and slacks in my wardrobe?
- ☐ . . .Would I prefer a single-breasted, a double-breasted or a trench-coat style?
- ☐ . . .How much can I allow from my clothing budget for the coat?

These guidelines on quality will help you shop.

- ☐ . Read the label on the garment.
- ☐ . Judge the workmanship.
- ☐ . Check the fit.

### **What About the Label?**

Manufacturers are required by law to provide a label or tag stating the fiber content of the outer fabric used in the coat. The names of the fibers and percentage by weight will be given. This label is usually found on the sleeve, although some manufacturers have begun sewing a permanent label to the front facing of the coat.

Since a greater number of fiber blends and manmade fibers are used in coat fabrics, the care label becomes more important. Many manufacturers are sewing care labels into garments as a permanent guide to the consumer.



Often the care label of an all-weather coat says that the coat is washable and gives directions for washing it. If this information is clearly stated, the consumer can assume that all parts of the garment—including the lining and interfacings—can be cared for in that manner. Over a period of time, however, the coat may be more attractive if it is dry cleaned instead of washed.

Unless the coat is labeled washable, it is best to have it dry cleaned. The outside fabric may launder well, but the lining or construction materials used in the coat may not. The resulting shrinkage could ruin the fit and appearance of the coat.

Zip-in pile linings, even if marked washable, show less matting and shagginess if they are dry cleaned. Most of them are not intended to be washable, and the consumer should not assume that they are just because the outer garment can be laundered.

Water repellency is a feature to look for in all-weather coats. A special finish penetrates the fibers of the coat and makes them resistant to wetting. Some finishes need to be reapplied after each cleaning or washing. Others are a more durable feature and will be effective through many cleanings or washings. The information tag or label should state if the finish is durable or nondurable. By protecting the fiber the water-repellent finish increases the life of the garment, guards against non-oily stains and adds wind-resistance to the coat.

### **Guidelines for Judging Workmanship**

☐ All plaids or patterned weaves should match and balance at the center back seam, the front opening, the point where the lower edge of the collar meets the jacket back, and the underarm seams. Pocket flaps or welts should match the pattern and each other. Ideally the front curve of the sleeve should correspond to the pattern of the coat front.

☐ Both sides of the buttonhole should be worked with close, even stitches with a reinforcement opposite the eyelet end. No untrimmed or tangled threads should be present.

☐ Pockets should be flat and smooth with reinforced corners. Their position on the garment should be identical. The inside of the pocket should be of a closely-woven, firm fabric.

☐ Buttons should have a long shank and slide through the buttonhole easily.

☐ The lining should be constructed of a closely woven, supple fabric. Sleeve linings should be made of a smooth fabric.

☐ Zippers for pile linings should be sturdy, easily workable in either direction and stitched securely to the edges.

☐ Coats with a partial lining should have seam edges that are stitched under or bound.

Back vents or flaps of the coat should be lined with lining material or self-fabric and reinforced at the upper edge.

☐ When the lapel is rolled forward, it should spring back into position quickly. This indicates quality interfacing in the coat.

### **Criteria for Fit**

☐ The coat should fit smoothly without a feeling of strain or tightness when it is buttoned up over a suit. If there is a zip-in lining, check to be sure the fit is easy when the lining is in.

☐ When the arms are moved in all directions, the coat should feel roomy through the chest and not bind.

☐ The shoulder seam from neckline to sleeve should be straight. Any padding should not be obvious.

☐ Armholes should be large enough not to bind when the coat is slipped on over a suit jacket.

☐ The collar should fit smoothly and snugly around the back and sides of the neck.

☐ Lapels should lie flat against the chest.

☐ The coat should hang smoothly from the shoulders to the hem edge without wrinkles or bulges.

### **Plus Features**

☐ A collar tab stabilizes the collar when it is turned up against the wind or cold.

☐ A knee tab lets the wearer button the coat farther down than the usual buttons go.

☐ A button in the vent allows the wearer to close it in inclement weather.

☐ Spare buttons make total button replacement unnecessary if one is lost. Backup buttons mean less likelihood of losing a button.

☐ A fully lined coat means increased warmth in inclement weather. The lining should be fastened to the coat at the seam lines with a tape or tab of self fabric.

☐ Vents lined, tape attached to prevent tearing out.

A short pile on a knit zip-in lining keeps its neat appearance better than long pile after many wearings and cleanings.